PICKLING AND FERMENTING

When doing fermenting or pickling, keep in mind that if any piece of the vegetable rises above the liquid surface, it will use the oxygen to make mould and ruin your food.

KIMCHI / KIMCHEE

This is traditional Korean side dish made from fermented cabbage, radish, or cucumber.

You need to brine napa cabbage using osmotic action of salt to dehydrate cabbage and season it with appropriate salt. Making kimchi can take a whole day or two. Suggest doing for 6 hours unless you like it very salty.

You can also add chives, mustard greens, parsley, young radish greens. When you store kimchi, keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Idea temperature to store is 3-5 degrees Celsius. It can last a few months in the refrigerator.

1 medium head napa cabbage (about 2 pd)
1.4 cup iodine free seasalt or kosher salt
Water, filtered
1 Tbsp grated garlic (5-6 cloves)
1 teaspoon grated peeled fresh ginger
1 tsp honey
2 tablespoons fish sauce or 3 Tbsp water
1-5 Tbsp red pepper flakes
8 oz daikon radish, peeled and cut into matchsticks
4 medium scallions, trimmed and cut into 1" pieces
Optional: 1/2 apple cubed

Cut cabbage lengthwise through stem into quarters, then cut cores from each piece. Cut each quarter crosswise into 2" wide strips

Salt the cabbage. Place cabbage in large bowl, sprinkle with salt. Massage salt into cabbage until it starts to soften a bit. Add enough water to cover the cabbage. Put plate on top or cabbage and weigh it down with something heavy like a jar or can of beans. Let stand 1-2 hr.

Rinse and drain the cabbage.

Make the spice paste. Rinse and dry the bowl you used for salting. Add garlic, ginger, sugar, fish sauce, or water and stir into a smooth paste. Stir in the red pepper flakes using 1 Tbsp for mild and up to 5 Tbsp for spice; set aside until cabbage is ready.

Combine veggies and spice paste. Gently squeeze any remaining water from the cabbage and add it to the spice past. Add radish and scallions. Mix thoroughly using your hands. Gently work past into the veggies until they are thoroughly coated. Gloves are optional but will protect your hands from stings, stains and smells.

Pack kimchi into jar, press down until brine (liquid that comes out) rises to cover veggies, leaving at least 1" space at the top. Seal jar.

Let ferment 1-5 days. Place bowl or plate under jar to help catch any overflow. Let jar stand at cool room temp. Out of direct sunlight for 1-5 days. You may see bubbles inside jar and brine may seep out of the lid.

Check it daily and refrigerate when ready. Check kimchi once a day, opening jar and pressing down veggies with clean finger or spoon to keep them submerged under the brine to release gases produced during fermentation. Taste. When to your liking, transfer jar to refrigerator. Best to let it sit for another week or two before eating.

BRINE PICKLES

yields 18 quarts
15 lbs small cucumbers or other veggies, chopped as preferred
2 cups salt per gallon of water
5 gallon crock or large pickle jar
Salt

Wash cucumbers, remove stem ends. Pack into stoneware or glass crock.

Cover with brine: 2 cups seasalt dissolved in 1 gallon of water. You will need 4 gallons of brine: 8 cups salt to 4 gallons water.

Fill with enough brine to cover cucumbers/veggies.

Cover crock with plate to hold down the veggies or pickles so they are submerged and won't develop

mould. Weigh the plate down so it pushes the veggies down into the brine.

Next day add 3 cups salt to the top of the plate. Salt added below the plate may sink, causing salt solution to be very strong at the bottom and weak at the surface, spoiling the pickles. The purpose of this additional salt is to maintain a 10% brine solution. Bring in which a fresh egg floats is approx. 10%.

At the end of 1 week, remove the weight and cover. Skim the brine with a spoon to remove any scum that formed on top. Wipe around the rim of the crock at the surface of the liquid with a clean, damp cloth. Wash the cover. Put the cover back on top to weigh down the veggies. Add 3/4 cup salt to the top of the plate.

Always remove scum as it forms, check daily.

At the end of each week, repeat the cleaning procedure, add 3/4 cup salt tot he top of the plate. Remember to skim surface if needed. Veggies must always be completely covered with brine.

Fermentation should be complete in 4-6 weeks. Test by tapping cock firmly on its side and if no bubbles form, the fermentation is complete. The cucumbers should be a dark olive green color through without no white spots.

When the fermenting is complete, the pickles/veggies may be eaten from the crock. This may also be further seasoned and packed in jars for future use. Before packing the brined cucumbers in jars, soak them in water to remove the salt. Use 3 times as much cold water as cucumbers and change the water every 8 hr. Stir cucumbers occasionally. Salt should be removed after 24 hr. After desalting, immediately pack cucumbers into clean sterilized quart jars. If you wish you can add a garlic clove sliced, a bay leaf, 1/2 tsp mustard seed to each jar. Also you can add 1-2 heads fresh dill to each jar if you wish.

Keep refrigerated.

PRESERVED LEMONS

makes ½ gallon

3 pounds lemons (10-14)

1 cup kosher salt

2 cups lemon juice plus more for filling jars

1-2 Tbsp bay leaves, cardamom pods, dried chilies, cinnamon sticks or other whole herbs and spices.

Scrub lemons, cut 1 end off each lemon. Hold lemon cut side up and slice lengthwise down center, stopping before the knife cuts all the way through the fruit. Rotate lemon a quarter turn and slice again lengthwise down center, stopping before the knife cuts all the way through the fruit. Repeat with remaining lemons. The lemons will be quartered but still attached at 1 end.

Pour salt into a medium bow. Working in batches, add cut lemons a few at a time and rub the flesh of each lemon with salt. Add a few tablespoons of salt from the bowl to the bottom of a sterilized ½ gallon glass jar. Push the first few lemons against the bottom of the jar, they will release juice. Add a few tablespoons of slat from the bowl to the jar, along with a sprinkle of herbs and spices. Salt a few more lemons in the bowl and transfer to the jar, repeating the process until the jar is full. You want to use all the salt in the bowl, so be generous as you layer the lemons and dump any leftover salt from the bowl into the jar at the end.

Press lemons down with a wooden spoon to release more juice. Pour additional lemon juice into the jar to fill all space around the lemons. Cover jar with a sterilized lid and shake well.

Let lemons ferment at room temperature, giving the jar a gentle shake or turn every day or so. Lemons will be ready to eat in 3 weeks at which time you can transfer them to the refrigerator where they'll keep for up to 1 year.

LEMON HONEY JELLY

2 ½ cups honey

3/4 cup lemon juice

6 Tbsp grated lemon zest

1 pouch (3 oz) liquid fruit pectin

Combine honey, lemon juice and zest. Bring to a full rolling boil in pot over high heat, stirring constantly. Stir in pectin. Continue to boil 1 minute, stirring constantly.

Remove from heat; skim off foam. Ladle hot mixture into three hot sterilized half-pint jars, leaving 1/4-in. headspace. Wipe rims. Center lids on jars; screw on bands until fingertip tight.

Place jars into canner with simmering water, ensuring that they are completely covered with water. Bring to a boil; process for 5 minutes. Remove jars and cool undisturbed for 24-48 hr.

SAUERKRAUT

Shred your cabbage, carrot, hot peppers or anything else you want to combine
3 Tbsp salt per 5 pounds of cabbage
Put into a large bowl or bucket and scrunch the salt into the vegetable matter and as you are doing this, liquid will be drawn out.
Pack into clean jar, everything needs to be under the liquid so you can put some large cabbage leaves on top to push down the mess, or just fill a zip lock bag with water and let that stand on top, pushing everything down to below the liquid.
If you have a proper crock, of course you will have a weight that comes with the crock and you can do it all in one crock.
Check daily that all is well. If there is white yeasty stuff floating, scoop it off.
You can do this for 5 days to 5 weeks. The longer it ferments, the more sour it becomes and the healthier it becomes for the gut.
Once you put this into sterile jars and seal, you should keep it in the refrigerator.

OTHER HANDY RECIPES

Fresh Basil Pesto

1 cup fresh basil leaves
4 Tbsp hemp hearts, or pine nuts, or walnuts
¼ cup olive oil
2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
¼ tsp sea salt
Fresh ground pepper
Use blender or food processor to combine all into the consistency desired.

Mayonnaise

2 whole eggs (or 1 whole egg and 1 yolk)
3 Tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp dijon mustard
½ tsp salt
pepper
1 ¼ cup oil
In slow blender, put in eggs and whisk, add lemon juice, mustard, salt and pepper, and then slowly drizzle in the oil as it emulsifies to be a nice thick mayonnaise. Store in clean, sterilized jar with lid in the refrigerator up to 1 1/2 wk.